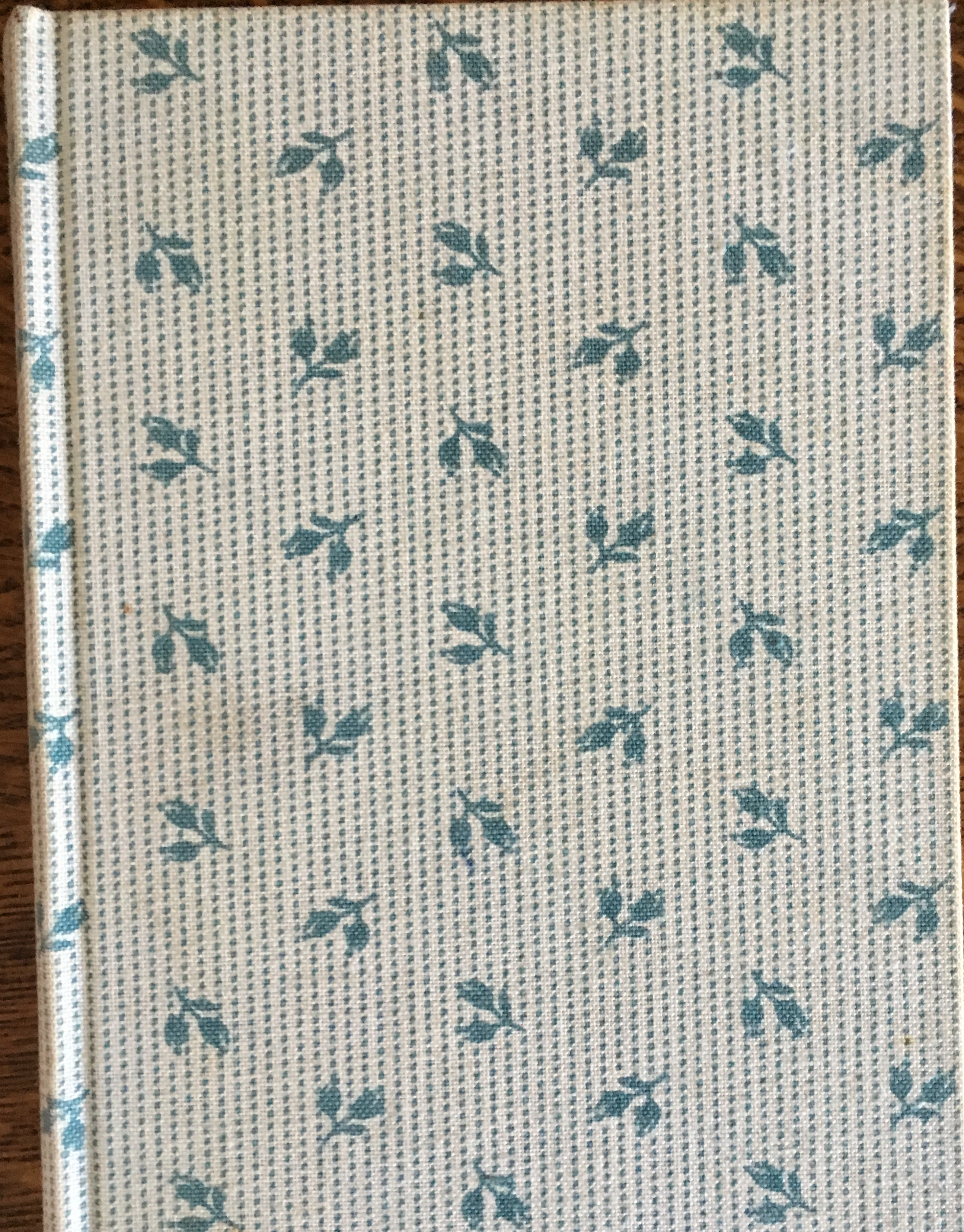

House Journal

1986 →

6/86 - 9/86

Brewster's story 6/86

Techno-kid with a difference. I delight in the art of observation and get a thrill from constructing things. Putting things together gives me a sense of meaning; proof that I exist.

A deep sense of insecurity makes me stay around people all of the time. I get bored by myself, but mostly I need the reassurance of friends. Coop life gives me the security of a family and a thrill of constructing.

A few of my favorite things:

Pere Ubu hugs water beds
Black high top sneakers toys Connection Machine
Back rubs Encyclopedic discussions This group of people

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6/29/86

Since moving in here a week and a half ago I must say I enjoy everyone, love the house & am generally having a good time.

I think a party on July 12th would be great, but I'm biased + happen to Love parties.

I also have another esoteric idea. Does anyone know of a kibbutz in Israel that we could write to? I thought it might be fun for this house to correspond with a kibbutz, we could highlight the similarities, discuss our differences (as countries, people's +

lifestyles, & personal)
and generally enjoy a
correspondence that could
be saved + re-read much
later in the future.

What do you guys think?
Any deviations or suggestions
on this idea.

Anyhow – thanks for the
great household –

Deb

I would like to find a coop in
the country that we could share
guest rights with. Brew

Okay. lets start looking for
one!
Deb

July 1, 1986 5:45 am

At this point in history,
an opinion:

Love, relationships & the
outdated concept that 2
people can actually get along
for a period of time after
a week
is completely overrated.

amen

July 1, 1986 Brew

Topics of nonconversation:
Masturbation
Pinching Pimples
Pissing in the shower
How much money you make
Periods
mental illness

Topics of conversation:
Food
Apartments
Other's relationships
movies

Topics
the kreb cycle
Strawberries
midieval agrarian history
weaving theory
Soviet birth control

Ellen's
Karls
Teresa Ful
Kevin O., Ca
Elizabeth + S
Jenny

Good

Ellen's Pot luck dinner:

Karl Sim, Brawster, Justin, Harry Atwater, Teresa Fulkner, evie Bernie, Andy Zeigler, Charlotte, Kevin O., Carl F, (2 other Kahn house people), Ellen's friends: Elizabeth + Selia, Alexandra + Matt, Debbie, Regan Perry, Jenny tingle, lots of Food.

July 2, 1986

Good good good food!

July 3, 1986

July 4th weekend DESCENDS.
It is truly SUMMER.
This summer I promised myself
that I'd Have Fun.
Last year on the 4th of July I
stayed home & sewed; this
year I'm going to Gloucester for
2 days, my place of Birth, to
walk the beach, talk to Yankees,
eat FISH, hike & explore and
take some time off from the
self-imposed stress of the
dailiness
of life.

*

Ellen is going to Amherst.

*

Brewster to New York

*

And what are your plans?

July 4th.

Got the house all to myself - it's really much too big for just one person. I'm the one who stays home & sews (or cleans the bathroom!) this year - I do that - let weekends & holidays sneak up on me & slip past - I can't decide if it bothers me or if I like spending a holiday quietly alone, 'far from the madding crowd.' Get out of the house, tho, at least. Beautiful, sunny day to celebrate selfish liberty.

For today, I decided — I like it.

July 6, 1986

Bob the Fish died yesterday. The Omens were there: when I bought him last Saturday I carried all of his stuff safely in a bag until I stepped over the threshold + CRACK, dropped + broke the bowl I had bought for him.

I forgot to put his rocks in his (the one Karl lent me) bowl until *after* Bob was in there so he had to cower while I let them drop one at a time.

His bowl was a foggy mess within 24 hours, I thought that was strange.

And when the woman at the Fish store told me I had a 7 day guarantee, I felt a premonition (shudder)
So Bob the Fish died.
I fed him too much. And he

tried to eat it all. Matthew spoke a touching eulogy over drinks last night:

"To Robert. We'll miss his funny little laugh, his silly walk, the way his gills moved in the water. But mostly, his funny little laugh."

Matt is convinced that Bob had suicidal tendencies but I know it was my force feedings (+ subsequent instructions to my housemates) that caused his premature death.

Bob, I'm sorry. Can you forgive me?

The next fish I get I'll feed 4 times a week ("But then she'll be the Jane Fonda of Fish!" Matt Protested) or at least be very careful.

At this rate I won't be able to graduate to birds until I'm 45 yrs.!

Brew Late at night

Ever feel unnecessarily moody? Right now life stinks. Everything + everybody stinks. Life always stunk, and there is no hope for the future. On the other hand, 3 days ago life was great, life had always been great, and life was going to continue that way.

Hum. I think I'll go put an ant in the microwave...

Patty cake songs

Oh little playmate
Come out and play with me
and bring your dollies three
under my apple tree

Slide down my rainpipe
and through my cellar door-
and we'll be jolly friends
forever more
more
more, more

Miss Lucy

Miss Lucy had a steamboat
the steamboat had a bell
Miss Lucy went to heaven
and the steamboat went to...

Hello, operator
ise me number Nine
andif you disconnect me
I will kick you in the...

Behind the refrigerator
there lay a piece of glass
and if you sit upon it
it will break your little...

Ask me no more questions,
I'll tell you no more lies
the boy are in the bathroom
pulling down their...

cont.

Flies are in the pantry
Bees are in the park
Boys + girls are kissing
in the D-A-R-K Dark, Dark
Dark - Dark

Jump Rope Song

Uno, doce, east + west
He brought me to the store
He bought me some candy
He bought me some cake
He brought me home with a bellyache

Mommy, mommy I feel sick
Call the doctor, quick, quick, quick
Doctor, Doctor will I die?
"Count to Five and you'll be alive"
One, two, three, Four, Five
I'm Alive!

Donald Duck is a one legged, one legged, one legged duck
Donald duck is a two legged, two legged, two legged duck
Donald duck is a three legged, three legged, three legged duck
Donald duck is a Four legged, Four legged, Four legged duck

7/14/86 Mon.

I am excited about this party we're having this Sat. night. Who is everyone inviting?

I've invited Matt, Dan, my friend Alex, Brenda + my friend Paul Gumsleton. Probably 3 out of 5 will come. Should I invite more? This is exciting. I will set aside Saturday day to help with the details if people can tell me what needs to be done. Keg? Music? Clean house? Any food?

Deb

If our other parties are any indication, we will be mobbed.

1 keg, cups
much cleaning
many veggies
dip
poster

punch?
tell our neighbors
gimmicks?

Invite all people you want to be here.

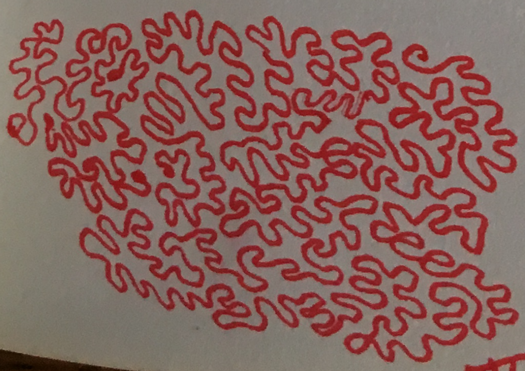
I am excited also. All day saturday is reserved for me also. Brew

Impratical idea for a party:

Give each person a candle when they get to the party. Have no lights in the house (except the bathroom). Have no matches either. Some of the candles are lit.

This would mean that people would congregate around other's light. People could blow each other's out. We would be conscious of light.

7/16/86



Brain cells?
Worm tunnels?
Sea weed?
Brillo pad?

JT

July 16

Well-

I would like to set aside Sat, but if I did that then I'd been working at night, sooo... once more (it seems every girl scout camp out, cook out, school parties, etc. I've always been part of the clean up crew) I can be part of the clean up crew.

-LN

while trying to draw faces
all I see are lines
but people don't have lines

To an outside observer;
There are 20 people
in a room.
There is a table.
20 people see this
table.
are there 20 tables?
Perhaps

-LN

aw faces
lines

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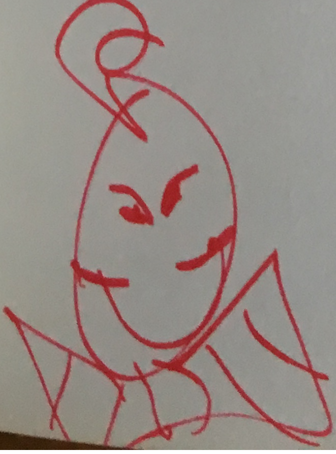
this

bles?

OUR
PARTY
WAS
GREAT!



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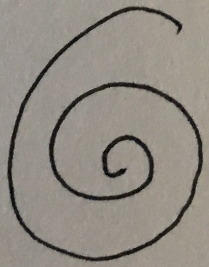
How much of your day is spent:

Driving
Eating
reliving conversations that have
never happened
sleeping
sleepy
actively doing work
reading advertizements
reading
walking to another place
getting dressed
spacing out
feeling guilty about any thing
preparing food
depressed
conversations

?



Brain storming
mass transport

TIME SPENT SLEEPING THE PAST WEEK.

7/21 4:30am - 9:30am

7/20 3:30am - 10am

7/19; 2:00 am - 9:30am

7/18: 12:30 - 7:30

⋮

7/17 ⋮

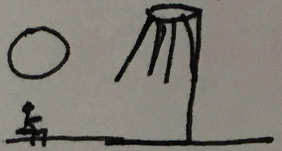
BEST COMMERCIALS:

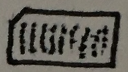
MAX HEADROOM FOR COKE

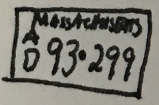
HONDA SCOOTERS w/ MILES DAVIS

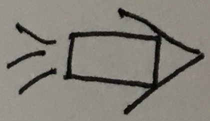
Brew

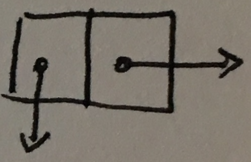
Today was the best of days. Summer is the greatest. Patti Klauer called it a California day. I went biking to Irwin's Emporium of Values (best toy store in Boston). Hacked at work under a florecent sun. Went swimming at sundown, and am sitting under a full moon + streetlight.

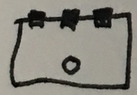


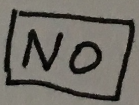


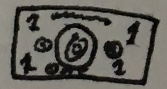












Given our random assortment of housemates we seem to be able to learn + grow with each other. I appreciate the support and care I get when I'm down + I love the experiences I can draw from when I'm up. Much love + thanks.

7/24/86

How much of our time is spent..
being afraid?

of wierd people?
new experiences
something that might happen
How embarrassed you'd be if
it did

Phobia's
not living up to your potential
or your own expectations?

of death

of dying alone
of living alone

How much time?

I have wierd phobia's
that crop up whenever
I'm down on myself.
They are a sort of transference.

whatever I don't want to face in myself I transfer to, usually, an inanimate object and play the emotions I'm repressing around that instead.

BASIC Psychology. But even knowing what is it doesn't always help. And it's usually around things I can't control. Like ... mass transportation.

So, for example, the last few weeks I've been feeling sick of my self, disappointed in me.

Rather than dig deep into that writhing mass of ego, hope & despair + change myself... (or, the human psyche as such) I transfer those feelings to feeling closed in, claustrophobic, nervous riding the T with a hundred people & no way to ESCAPE! when what I really want to escape is the me I'm pissed off at.

If this all sounds strange, it is, so don't worry about trying to understand the details.

*　　*　　*

So, yesterday, I'm walking in Harvard Square feeling pretty good and thinking, "I am not in prison somewhere, I'm not starving, paralyzed or sick. I am young, free & healthy so why can't I go wild + live up to my potential instead of living in this prison I've created inside my mind. I'm a strong person therefore I create strong prisons.

All of this is very 'deep' + 'soul-searching', I know, but it's definitly been on my mind this week. Arghhhhh! Frustration at myself!

deb

Something is going to come out of all of this anxiety + questioning. I feel like I'm at the top of a hill on a

Something is going to come out
of all of this anxiety +
questioning. I feel like I'm
at the top of a hill on a
rollercoaster, looking down +
theres no way off.

But its time to remember:
It is only a ride.

dy

When 4 are better than 1

Warts could possibly quench desires of soft
Creampuffs are purple with mountainous
oogles of
Debbie's very own good friend Ferdinand
(with a yak) so big bazookas could announce
that french dressing sucks the pants off me.

art?

"That which is owned by the most
is cared for the least."

8/16/86

Hi, House journal, long time, no talk!

What has the house been up to lately?

Well Brewster went to Vermont, came back, then took off on a driving trip. maybe to Ohio? with a friend. Vacation!

Karl just got back last night from a week in Spain then he's going to Texas next week.

Charlotte leaves for Dallas next Friday, gone for a week to visit her sister.

Ellen is housesitting this week in Lexington & has her parents car, yay! And her dog.

Andy & Suzanne are camping in New Hampshire this weekend.

I was in Washington, Maryland & Baltimore 2 weeks ago. Will probably go to Vermont over Labor Day weekend.

Am working 10 hr. days so I look forward to my weekends to recuperate. And now I have Brewsters computer to play with if

I can get it to work.
Cheers! Fall is on its
way, I can feel it.

* * * * *

Tension floats in the air. I had a marvelous driving trip. Art + I drove his bug 2K miles and visited friends + factories.

day later

We basically visited other's ways of life + work. People (old friends) have different styles of everything. not all ~~of the~~ of them were happy, but their was a variety that was refreshing. I feel like Ive become specialized. I feel more free now because of all the possibilities.

Tension of change floats in the air here. Ellen + Charlotte are moving out. This feels unsettling to me because I dont think of much change in my home. I guess I should become more comfirtable with that. Living in a group at this age is hard. People have a specialized developed styles. Many of my friends live alone or [illegible] alone.

I believe it to be possible and desirable to live in a group. We can share in each other & learn from each other. I enjoy [illegible] others friends and hobbies.

I don't have to be specialized or alone

have
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basically
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learn
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alized

some of
Ellen's thoughts:

Even as I begin writing my cynical self murmurs "why bother," as Andy, Brewster, and Karl ~~take what I say as~~ seem to ~~t~~ write off as invalid my opinions and ideas even before I've said them. For many months now I have been experiencing negative responses to my statements from you three, and any affirmation comes only after Charlotte ~~either~~ voices either that she ~~sees~~ understands my point of view ~~or~~ and does agree, or can understand, but disagrees.

To be ~~want~~ writing this here is important

Andy, Karl + Brewster don't understand, don't try to understand, but simply tell me or imply that I am wrong.

both ~~of~~ because I rarely see Andy, Brewster or Karl, and when I do, I don't feel like talking because I don't want to experience ~~to~~ unnecessary negative feedback.

(I'm also very upset that my good bike tools are missing and NO ONE has told me anything about them; either that they have no idea where they are, a vague idea, or a definite idea. If I don't find them before I leave I'll replace them and put the cost on the monthly bills sheet)

~~[illegible]~~

Getting back to my original reason for writing - a response to Brewster's statement that it is possible to live in a group home, and that we can ~~live and~~ share and learn from eachother.

I ~~fe~~ agree in the abstract, but you can only learn from eachother if you discuss your experiences of interaction on all levels, not just the happy, positive level. People have negative reactions to some actions, and that should be discussed too. I ~~feel that~~ have felt in this house the pressure to be happy - and if I am not happy then something is wrong with me, and I better fix it fast, ~~and which I~~ do ~~know~~ as being unhappy is an abnormality - but by fixing it, I want to know why I am unhappy not suppress + ignore it + the main message I have received here is to suppress and ignore. ~~As an~~

As an example I told Brewster one time that I believe I could walk into this house with dog shit on my shoes, stomp it all over the kitchen floor, leaving it there in great ~~b~~ stinking blobs. Then I would take my shoes off, ~~and~~ go upstairs go to bed, ~~coming~~ come down to next morning to find it all cleaned up with no one mentioning a word of it to me. And Brewster said he probably would clean it up & not mention it,

Now to dissect this example: It is not my normal habit to cover ~~this~~ the kitchen floor or any interior/exterior surface with filth. If I were to do this something must be upsetting me very much. I would not want this action to be treated as if it never happened, nor would I want to be sternly told to go clean it up. I would want someone to ~~ask why~~ stop +

take the time out to ~~the~~ ask what was disturbing me. Of course I would clean the mess up, but if someone approached me about it I would probably feel more grounded + less off the wall.

In reality I would never stamp in w/ dog shit on my shoes, I was using an extreme example.

I'm glad Brewster you enjoy Ferron's album Testimony, for that ~~is some of me~~ has some of my favorite songs on it, and it also happens to be one

one of the albums that
was referred to ~~as~~ last
year as "Ellen's women's
music", an unfortunate
category to ~~put~~ label timeless,
genderless ideas voiced through
the lyrics and the melodies.

One upsetting occurrence
which happened recently
concerns my food weight. As
I recall, way back in
February I ~~[illegible]~~ felt
uncomfortable with the way the
food bill was handled, yet
~~every it~~ even mentioning
changing it stirred up a
strong negative reaction, and ~~as~~ any
of ~~the~~ my suggestions for
change were disagreed with,
yet the overriding response
was "You don't like it

you change it " For a
group home that is neither
a group, nor a collective
suggestion. And as a
~~tried to change it I was~~
~~thwart~~ my suggestions
were immediately vetoed,
I couldn't change it in
a group/collective way.
Basically, the message I
received was "You don't
like it, you, yourself
must take on the task of
changing the food bill habit
of six people, five of whom
won't cooperate." So rather
than waste my time, and
drain my energy, I
chose to change the way I

myself ate here + spent
money on food here. So
basically I stopped eating here,
with an occasional meal
or snack, which accounts for
why I put down any food
weight at all.

For the last bill I had a
weight of .2. Before Karl left
for his trip to Spain he
asked me if I really ~~thou~~.
believed Charlotte ~~et~~ eats five
times more than I do. Well,
no, I probably eat more than
Charlotte ~~than~~ overall - But
in this house, of this house
food she definitely eats more
than I do, as, I told him
I rarely eat here. His
response was, ~~[illegible]~~ that

everyone here rarely eats here, thus refusing to ~~seen the~~ accept / realize the fact that I don't eat breakfast, lunch, or dinner here, and haven't for awhile - and if he truly feels that noone else eats breakfast lunch or dinner here then he should be approaching them and suggesting they lower their food weights.

But what got me very angry - outraged - was Karl's request for me to be honest. My reaction to this was a stunned silence. Suzanne eats here more than

I do, yet she doesn't have a food weight (nor would I want her to) and Karl tells me to be honest. Karl, would you be satisfied if I put a ~~big~~ food weight equal to or higher than Charlotte's thus paying much more than I eat?' Damn it, Karl how dare you accuse me of being dishonest in the face of what's obvious?

And Brewster wonders why there's tension in the air.

Upon Karl's return I told him I was upset that he questioned the validity of my food weight, and he denied having questioned this. But, ~~has~~ requesting someone to be honest is a not too subtle questioning.

This is one of the many experiences of denial I have been through at this house, and even now while you all are reading this you are probably arguing in your head that I am wrong, that none of this ever happened. Yet I have experienced it, so it has happened to at least one of the six of us & if any of you hope/expect

to share + learn from
those you live with,
you better learn to listen
and learn the willingness
to work out compromises.

It is too bad that I
~~resolv~~ have to write this
in here, but I feel that
it must be said, and since
group meetings, rap
sessions, whatever you
prefer to call them, are
taboo, unless I want to
exert the energy to get
six, unwilling, uncooperative
people together at the same
time for more than 30
minutes (another

had in
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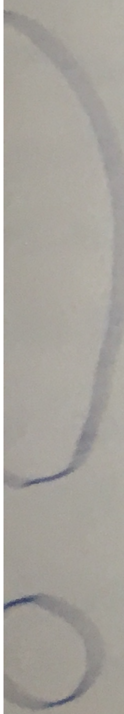

Brewster

Thank you for writing all that.
I want to understand your frustrations
as well as your advancements.
that I'm pretty different. I feel
like I ~~[illegible]~~ burden so many people when I'm
a bit down. I don't find myself at
all alone, though sometimes others might.
You have said that I always seem
pleased I'm not. I generally keep
my head above water by getting help
and support from my friends.

I also, have a strange sense of
privacy. People are different from
me so I try to let them be the way
they want. This is in response to
the "shit on the rug" scenario. If someone
is upset for a time I can tolerate alot.
Hopefully the person will figure out a
way to stop. This includes talking to people
about it. If I wanted to ~~[illegible]~~ mess up
the house because of some trauma and
didn't want to talk about it (this seems
to happen when I'm breaking up with people.)

experience I had in this house) well then, ~~here~~ this journal seems to be the best place to record these house-related ~~ideas~~ issues.

!

Brewster

Thank you for writing all that. I want to understand your frustrations aswell as you achievements.

Yup, I'm pretty different. I feel like I [illegible] dump on too many people when I'm a bit down. I don't find myself at all subtle, though sometimes others might. You have said that I always seem pleased. I'm not. I generally keep my head above water by getting help and support from my friends.

I, also, have a strange sense of privacy. People are different from me so I try to let them be the way they want. This is in responce to the "shit on the rug" scenario. If someone is upset for a time I can tollerate alot. Hopefully the person will figure out a way to stop. This includes talking to people about it. If I wanted to [illegible] mess up the house because of some trauma and didn't want to talk about it (this seems to happen when I'm breaking up with people) then I would like others to tollevate it for awhile. Everyone has the right to be adrag for awhile.

Enough.

The only misgiving I have about the last year is the malise I feel in these last weeks. I hope we can all live without these problems. in the future.

Autumn

9/5/86

Just a reminder: Deb moves out September 13th, Saturday.

Promotion at Bread & Circus!

My part time job gave me a promotion + raise last nite. I will be traned for the Courtesy BOOTH up front + given $1.00/hr. raise.

I saw Prince Charles yesterday.

9.07.86 Charlotte.

Sometimes I find the scale of things too large to handle - world problems/politics, the network of interactions of the people around me, even this house, physically - it's more than I can see in my head at one time. I don't think I'm stupid, but I know people perceive + think in different ways, + I've noticed this about how I think. When these things seem overwhelming to me, I withdraw from them. I stop being politically active, I stop trying to mediate in the interrelationships of my friends, I move out. I'm not particularly proud of this pattern. I'm not pleased that it might have made things harder here. I try not to 'give in' to the inclination to throw my arms up at every confusion, but in some circumstances, trying to 'figure it out' just doesn't seem worth fighting for.

Levels of intimacy – what is concern & caring and what is invasion of privacy – seems to have been a problem here. People tend to give what *they* need (not what others want from them) and take (or perceive) only as much as they want (or expect?) from others.

these things must be as important as gender or vocation in choosing housemates successfully.

The complication will also still be here of unequal wealth, unequal goals for the house (its stability, continuity, luxuriousness/austerity, the level of commitment of each of its members.

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September 14, 1986

Thank you all for a wonderful summer in Sommerville!

I appreciate so much being accepted into the household for awhile.

Good Luck + Farewell + Thank-you!

Deborah
Young
9/14/86

Castle people 9/89

Andy Ziegler
Brewster Kahle
Karl Sims
Harry Atwater

1st summer Jeff
Bruce
Teresa Falker

Amy Lutinger
John Hrymiewitz sp.
Vanora
Vera
Karla Lehtonen

Regan Perry
Terry (again)

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move to Fenway

Adrian Nye
Robin Rustad
Tom Cloney

Ben + Eves 9/89

Andy
Brewster
Karl
Ellen Brooke
Sharon Weissman
Steve Untersee
Charlotte Kemp
Debbie young
Donna Woods
Bebbie Dale Putman
Jane Keller
[illegible]
Jim Stiles
Alaina Ray Smith
Julianne Dalcanton
Heidi Clyne
Niels LaWhite
Hope Perlman